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SUBJECT: UGANDA-LRA MEDIATION INITIATIVE INCHES FORWARD

11. (SBU) Summary: Government of Southern Sudan (GoSS) Vice President Riek Machar will return from Maridi on July 12, where he traveled to meet with Lord's Resistance Army leaders. Ugandan Consulate officials say that the Ugandan delegation is prepared to travel as soon as Machar returns and confirms mutually acceptable dates; we do not expect this to occur before next week. The Swiss Government is providing funding in support of the mediation initiative. End summary.

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Coaxing Kony  
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12. (SBU) GoSS Ministry of Regional Affairs officials informed CG Juba that VP Machar had traveled to Maridi on July 10 to meet with "senior LRA officials" in an attempt to coax Joseph Kony into sending Vincent Otti to Juba to join the LRA delegation that has been here for nearly a month. The GoSS believes that the current composition of the delegation is too expatriate and too civilian to be able to take binding decisions for the LRA. Machar is scheduled to return to Juba on July 12. It is not clear if he succeeded in convincing Kony to upgrade his representation here.

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Ugandan Delegation Ready to Travel  
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13. (SBU) Official at the Ugandan Consulate told CG that Uganda has named its full delegation, which is prepared to travel to Juba. There is no departure schedule at this time: the Ugandans are waiting to consult with Machar upon his return to discuss dates before sending the GOU team. The consular officials did not believe that this would happen before the end of the current week. They could not confirm GoSS claims that there would be a public opening ceremony, and said that the agenda and ground rules for the talks had not been set. These would be subject to discussion following the arrival of the Ugandan delegation.

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Switzerland Provides Support  
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14. (SBU) A Swiss diplomat based in Khartoum called on CG July 11 to discuss the GOU-LRA mediation. The diplomat said that Machar had sent a letter to the Swiss Foreign Ministry requesting expertise and financial and logistical support of the mediation initiative. In response, the Swiss Government had agreed to provide the requested support. The diplomat had come with a Letter of Intent to be signed with the GoSS Ministry of Regional Affairs. The letter offers in broad-brush strokes support of the GoSS initiative as well as an offer to help the GoSS maintain the dialogue with the International Criminal Court. The only specific requested of the GoSS is adequate office space and consideration of provision of adequate housing and transport to the Swiss experts on the ground supporting the talks.

HUME